

REMARKS

Claims 13, 15 and 17-22 are presented. Claims 13 and 15 are independent.

Claim 13, 18 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ahm (USPN 5,101,594) in view of O'Connor (USPN 6,176,068) and Ito et al. (USPN 4,469,243). Claims 15 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ahm (USPN 5,101,594) in view of O'Connor (USPN 6,176,068) as applied to claim 15, and further in view of Ellis (USPN 5,516,256). Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ahm (USPN 5,101,594) in view of O'Connor (USPN 6,176,068) as applied to claim 13 above, and further in view of O'Connor (USPN 6,035,608). Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ahm (USPN 5,101,594) in view of O'Connor (USPN 6,176,068) as applied to claim 15, and further in view of O'Connor (USPN 6,035,608), Yamada (USPN 4,427,404) and Ellis (USPN 5,516,256).

The rejections are respectively traversed. The claims have been amended by amendment of the independent claims to define invention more precisely. Claim 13 as amended is directed to the combination of seeds for germination and a packed tape comprising at least one folded tape and a package. In accordance with the invention as defined in claim 13, the tape carries the seeds and is zigzag folded into at least one oblong stack in such a manner that some of the bendings of the tape are flush with the ends of the stack whereas the remaining bendings are positioned at varying distances therefrom, thereby producing layers that are successively relatively long,

intermediate and short, and facilitating pulling the tape out of the package. The packed tape comprises several stacks arranged in parallel. The package is selected from the group consisting of a plastic sheet and a cardboard box, and separating sheets are inserted between the stacks.

Independent claim 15 has been similarly amended. In particular, it specifies that some of the bendings of the tape are flush with the ends of the stack and the remaining bendings are positioned at varying distances therefrom, thereby producing layers that are successively relatively long, intermediate and short, and facilitating pulling the tape out of the package.

The invention as defined in the amended claims is well supported by the original disclosure. In Fig. 1, for example, the relatively long layers are those that extend from wall to wall; the intermediate layers are the ones that abut one wall but not both walls; and the short layers are the ones that abut neither wall. Figs. 3 and 4 of the application show processes for laying down the layers.

The invention as defined in the amended claims is neither disclosed nor suggested by the documents relied upon.

The Office Action recognizes at page 2 that Ahm does not disclose whether or not the bendings of the tape are flush with the edges. The passage of O'Connor '068 at column 8, lines 1-8, relates to an interconnecting portion 31 that extends from the top of one stack down the side of that stack and into the bottom of the next stack. Different interconnecting techniques are described, but none produces layers that are successively relatively long, intermediate and short, as disclosed and claimed in the present application.

The other documents relied upon are cited for various disclosures having nothing to do with the deficiency noted above and, like O'Connor '068, fail to make up for that deficiency. Ito et al. discloses sheets 32 between stacks 52 and 54. Ellis discloses circulating belts 38-60. O'Connor '608 discloses means whereby after the compressing of the tape the package can be

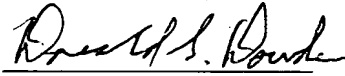
rolled up and closed about the stack at the same time as the compartment is removed. Yamada discloses a frame structure that enables supporting a package to allow a tape to be folded and packaged simultaneously.

Thus all of the documents relied upon, whether considered individually or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the invention as defined in the amended claims.

Since the outstanding rejections are inapplicable to the claims as amended and resubmitted, it is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

If a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call undersigned counsel.

Respectfully submitted,
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